



ASPEN

Professional Development E-Newsletter



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WELCOME TO ASPEN

Dear Reader,

The Office of Head Start is excited to offer a new venue for communication on important early childhood issues—an e-newsletter entitled Aspen. (See below for title explanation). This inaugural issue focuses on professional development and is available solely online.

This initial e-newsletter is a follow-up to the Professional Development Bulletin published last year. With the reauthorization of Head Start in December, 2007, we are recommitted to improving the educational standards and development of all staff. The e-newsletter's emphasis in 2008 will be on professional development and ensuring the quality of Head Start services.

Gone are the days of only one method to communicate and share information. Through the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) Web site, we offer content information, training modules, consultant directories, streaming videos, Webinars, and distance learning information. Head Start continues to be a leader in professional development for early childhood and family services.

I would like to acknowledge Karen Davison, National Head Start Fellow in 2006-2007, for her work in bringing this e-newsletter to life. Please join us in our virtual voyage to the future!

Pat Brown
Acting Director
Office of Head Start

THE ASPEN TREE

by JoAn Knight Herren

Some years ago, while visiting Wyoming, I came across a stand of Aspen trees. I learned a big lesson that day. In admiring their beauty, I found out that, while they look like separate trees, they are actually linked by a common root system. Water and nutrients drawn in through the roots are shared among members of the group. This shared commitment to the well being of the group remains even in the face of hardship...in times of

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PROYECTO AVANZAR: MEETING IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF HEAD START STAFF AS COLLEGE STUDENTS

Submitted by: Nancy Baptiste, Ph.D., and Luis Huerta Charles, Ph.D., New Mexico State University

The early childhood staff at New Mexico State successfully implemented and funded a community collaborative professional development project for Head Start staff who also are students. The authors describe how Proyecto Avanzar identified needs, challenges, and resources for non-traditional students who needed to gain knowledge in a digital age. The program's efforts demonstrate how one community worked together to improve the quality and long term effectiveness of local Head Start services to Hispanic/Latino children and their families. [More>>](#)

Full text article at:

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Individual%20Development/Connecting%20to%20a%20Higher%20Education%20Program/prodev_art_00063_061307.html

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OFFERS RESOURCES ON LEADERSHIP TOPICS

JoAn Knight Herren, Chief, T/TA Branch, suggests leadership resources for early childhood professionals throughout the country. This bibliography includes a selection of books on appreciative inquiry, conflict resolution and management. Members of the Head Start community and staff will find this bibliography helpful for learning about leadership skills including conflict resolution, management and problem solving using appreciative inquiry techniques. [More>>](#)

Bibliography at:

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Staff%20Development/Leaders%20at%20All%20Levels/prodev_bib_00058_032307.html

ACHIEVING ASSOCIATE DEGREES BY WORKING WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND HEAD START STAFF

Submitted by: Bruce Stam , ECE Program Chair, Chemeketa Community College, Salem, Oregon.

Article first published in Professional Development: The Cornerstone for Trust and Empowerment. Head Start Bulletin #72

Community colleges offer excellent partnership opportunities for Head Start staff. This brief article includes questions to ask to assess a community college degree program; information to collect and steps to take to assess Head Start program staff professional development needs; and suggestions for encouraging staff and directing their expectations. [More>>](#)

Article at: http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Individual%20Development/Credit-Based%20Learning%20Overview/prodev_art_00004_060205.html

ONLINE LEARNING MAKES FURTHER EDUCATION POSSIBLE

Distance education has become an option for people whose personal and professional responsibilities make it difficult for them to attend classes in a traditional classroom setting. This article shows how some students have benefited from the flexibility and learning environment offered by online courses and how these experiences have enabled them to pursue their education or further their professional development. Students share insights on why they chose

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ONLINE LEARNING MAKES FURTHER EDUCATION POSSIBLE *continued from page 2*

distance education, their experiences in the classes including challenges they faced, what they learned from the experiences, and advice for potential students.

Original article located in: Student Views of Distance Learning. Head Start Bulletin Professional Development #79. DHHS/ACF/OHS. [More>>](#)

Article at:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Individual%20Development/Personal%20Stories/StudentViewsof.htm>

CAPTURE LIFELONG LEARNING EXPERIENCES; MAXIMIZE POTENTIAL

ICF International: Knowledge Management White Paper

Knowledge Management (KM) describes the process of gathering, classifying, analyzing and sharing information so that an organization can collectively pursue its objectives efficiently. Geared toward managers, this white paper is an informative overview of KM concepts and processes. Topics covered include: the benefits of KM initiatives, the characteristics of a climate that make KM so essential, and the components of KM that support organizational goals. [More>>](#)

White paper at:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Organizational%20Development/Cultivating%20a%20Learning%20Organization/KnowledgeManagem.htm>

LEARNING TO LEARN IN A DIGITAL AGE

Submitted by: Howard Major, Ed. D., Debbie Taylor-Major, M. Ed., Aims Community College

Incorporating online re-usable learning objects into the learning process calls for students to be self-directed, active learners. This paper provides educators with general information and practical suggestions for transitioning to a facilitator approach to classroom instruction. By using strategies that help students “learn-to-learn,” this shift in instructional practice creates a learning-centered environment that promotes the higher-level thinking skills needed for the 21st century digital age. [More>>](#)

Available at:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Individual%20Development/Connecting%20to%20a%20Higher%20Education%20Program/Learning%20to%20Learn%20in%20a%20Digital%20Age.htm>

WHAT IS E-RATE AND HOW DOES IT REDUCE HEAD START COSTS?

Learn how Head Start programs can receive discounts for access to high speed Internet connectivity and telecommunication services. The article includes links to Web sites that can help programs determine eligibility for E-Rate Funds. [More>>](#)

Full text article at:

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Professional%20Development/Individual%20Development/Connecting%20to%20a%20Higher%20Education%20Program/prodev_fts_00065_062207.html;1182784420938



THE ASPEN TREE *continued from page 1*

drought, trees nearer to the source of water will draw up only as much as they need to survive. This allows more water to be passed along through the roots to trees further up the hillside.

It reminds me of the interconnectedness of Head Start programs and their partners. In the years since I first used this metaphor, I've become increasingly aware of the generosity of spirit of the people in this program. During good times and bad, programs are eager and willing to learn new ways to offer quality service. We are part of a community of learners, each making the most of every opportunity to share new information and techniques. We share an insatiable appetite for research to support our work together. We will try the new technologies to take our message out to the furthest reaches of our domain.

At the time I first shared this story in 1998, a member of the TTA Network, Dawn Thomas, wrote a poem honoring the Aspens and us. It is reprinted, with her permission, below.

LIKE THE ASPEN

Poem by Dawn V. Thomas, Research Coordinator, Pathways Project, Champaign, IL

Like the Aspen tree that grows
With roots entwined and digging deep
When streams of living water flows
Ensuring life; fulfills, completes
The picture in our vision's eyes
And melodies within our ears
With nurturance against demise
The Aspen strains throughout the years.

So, like the Aspen we belong
In communities and families
And like the root, sure and strong
We bind ourselves to find the keys
To nourish and to pass along
Sustaining brooks that feed the soul
And learn from those who simply long
To share the parts, and form the whole.

June 23, 1998

THANK YOU AND FUTURE SUBMISSIONS

The Office of Head Start is proud to present ASPEN, the first edition of a new professional development electronic newsletter. The e-newsletter is designed to offer short clips of information on current issues in early childhood education and references or links for further research.

Karen Davison, LCSW, National Head Start Fellow, 2006-2007, worked with JoAn Knight Herren, Chief of the Training and Technical Assistance Branch, Trish Warner and Aisha Mahy of the Head Start Resource Center, and Bridget Shea of the Head Start Knowledge and Information Management Systems (HSKIMS) to initiate the project.

We encourage suggestions for future issues. Send them to patricia.clark@acf.hhs.gov

Thank you,

Patricia Clark
National Head Start Fellow 2007-2008, Office of Head Start